

The Self-Effacing Husband Who Was "Domestic," While the Wife Sought a Career.

MRS. REDMOND'S SHAME

BY MAXIMILIAN FOSTER.
In The Star's Fiction Series
by American Authors.

The Author:
Maximilian Foster.

Maximilian Foster says of himself that he only writes when there is no fishing! And fishing is more than a hobby with him, for he has invented a fly that is not only a winner in snaring trout, but has equal merit in catching salmon.

As a result of a desire to support himself by writing, he joined the newspaper world for the reason that he believed that the newspapers supplied the best experience.

Mr. Foster's first story, 10,000 words in length and sold to the Atlantic Monthly, was written entirely at night in a newspaper office. He was doing rewrite work at the time, and would write down a page of that and then return to a page of his own story. It was a long and laborious job, but after that first success he sold many stories to the Atlantic Monthly.

He has written much fiction which has appeared in all the leading magazines, but at present all of his work is scheduled far ahead by three of the largest publications in the country.

During the time we were in the great war he was United States correspondent abroad.

Mary Stewart Cutting, Jr.

easy victory. Already opposition had reared its head; and his air questioning, his astonishment growing on him, Redmond hurriedly drew out his watch.

He had made no mistake, however. It was a quarter to 8—fifteen minutes past the hour; and again Redmond shot a glance at his wife's vacant place. The night before he had not seen Mrs. Redmond, though in that itself was nothing strange. They occupied separate rooms—he active life his wife was frequently out at night long after he had gone to bed. What was strange was that, on a day to her so vital, Myrta Redmond should let time dwindle beneath her feet.

He was still standing there, watch in hand and wondering, when the pantry door opened, and a gaunt, angular figure in cap and apron appeared. It was a maid, the Redmonds' waitress.

"You're late," she greeted abruptly, bluntly.

Redmond knew he was. That, however, did not concern him now. Neither was he the more concerned in the maid's brusque abruptness. Normally, of his own choice, Redmond would have preferred a different, less thin-lipped, sere and flint-eyed Hebe to serve him his repasts; but Mrs. Redmond, naturally, had made the choice. The woman, Harriet Lipp, was a protégée of hers, a fragment, in fact, of that human social wreckage Myrta Redmond, in part with her career, made it a habit to snatch from troubled waters and relaunch again in life. The waitress, in fact, owed not only her present place to Mrs. Redmond, she owed also her liberty to her. Mrs. Redmond's influence with the state pardon board having obtained Harriet Lipp's release from a three-year sentence in the penitentiary. As Mrs. Redmond, however, had pointed out, it was for a crime of violence, not one of ignominious meanness or stealth, for which Harriet had been convicted; but of this distinction, a difference, in Mrs. Redmond's view, Redmond was not thinking now.

"Where's your mistress?" he inquired.

"Upstairs," the woman answered briefly.

The reply, too, was as blunt, as brusque as it was brief; and his distaste for her growing, Redmond stared at the woman.

"When is Mrs. Redmond coming down?" he asked.

Harriet Lipp's air did not alter.

"She ain't," she answered, and Redmond started.

"What?"

"Eh? breakfasting abed," said Harriet Lipp.

"In bed?" Redmond echoed.

"Uh huh," repeated Harriet Lipp.

Wondering, vaguely perturbed, now, Redmond wandered to the table. In the same wonder, he drew out a chair and seated himself, the maid watching him with hard, aggressive eyes. It was nothing new, though, that Redmond should breakfast alone. Often, in her full, active life, Mrs. Redmond was up and away even before he had come downstairs. There were days, too, often weeks, when her official duties, public affairs, called her entirely from her home. No, to be alone was nothing new. But now—Redmond breakfasting in bed? That was new—yes.

A woman's trick, that—breakfast in bed. It was a trick, too—a woman's trick—of a sort that Myrta heretofore would have scorned. The soft, the indulgent, the femininely womanly thing, Redmond presumed, to her they meant but one thing—a confession of sex-of the weakness a confession of sex involved. The parity of the sexes—the abolition, rather, of all sex—that was Mrs. Redmond's watchword.

"Here," Redmond said sharply to the maid. "Bring me my eggs and coffee."

He sat there, staring at his hands. Something had happened, he saw that; something visibly out of the way. Redmond, in fact, in the twelve years of his married life, had grown, if only subconsciously, too familiar with his wife's ways, her habits, not to sense that something unusual had occurred to her. His indications, however, were not merely the other, a trivial circumstance of her breakfasting in bed. Of late he had noted in his wife's usual calm, her somewhat complacent self-restraint, a hint of nerves, of temperament—a reaction as if she labored under some secret weight, a burden. Uneasy, now, a frown puckered on his brow. What had troubled her, he wondered, his uneasiness gaining ground.

It was rarely, if ever, now, in these later years, that Mrs. Redmond confided in the man she'd married. Between the two, it was as if the usual marital situation had become reversed—he, not she, the dependent; she the master hand. The change, however—if such had happened—was not just equitable; for Redmond—if he were the interior—bent under what virtually was a double responsibility—that of the provider, the one who brought in the living; with that he, to all intents and purposes, ran the household as well. Of that, never mind, however. With all the other calls on Mrs. Redmond, there might have been some excuse, some reason, that John Redmond had stepped into the breach. He had not complained. Overshadowed by his wife's submerged in her growing prominence—the added task John Redmond had shouldered as if a duty, his.

HE WAS not thinking of it now. He was not thinking, either, of how he himself had become submerged, thrust inconspicuously into the background of their married life. Wonder still reigned among his thoughts; and in their confusion his mind leaped with a quick informality from one thought to another. It is the way with those who mull things over—solitarily. Something was wrong—wrong with Myrta Redmond; and he mind dwelt on that—something wrong with Myrta.

With Myrta, yes—not just Mrs. Redmond. You understand, no doubt. In other words, there were in Redmond's mind two figures, always two: Myrta, first; then, well, the other, Mrs. Redmond. The two were vividly distinct. Myrta, the one he'd married, had (to him) never changed; she still was the one, the same; but the other, the Mrs. Redmond who'd taken his name, still was using it—she and Redmond were far apart. It was only at odd intervals now, brief and far apart, that their married life came back to him. She was still there, though. She was there now. Trouble—

A "mere" husband, an appendage, well, the term fitted well enough. It was queer, though, the twist the



THERE WAS A MOVEMENT AMONG THE PILLOWS, SHARP, VEHEMENT, VISIBLY EMPHATIC.

moment gave to it. In trouble—if she were—Mrs. Redmond was not merely Mrs. Redmond. He was a husband—yes; and instinctively to him she became transformed. She was Myrta; and as Myrta, his wife, if Myrta needed help—

Redmond, startled, had half risen from his chair when the pantry door opened; and the woman, Harriet Lipp, stalked forth.

"There's y'r eggs," she pronounced. Redmond resumed his seat. To Myrta he could have flown offering aid. To Mrs. Redmond—well, that was different.

He sat there, mulling. The Lipp woman had withdrawn; and his eggs grew cold within the cup. Mulling it over, his thoughts were now going to full tilt, galloping. In the way with those who mull, one thing ran into another, piling up in magnitude. If something really was wrong, what was it? A hundred thoughts raced into his mind—politics, schemes, plots for place, for power. With women, women didn't differ much from men. Politics, too, were Mrs. Redmond's daily pabulum. Had she done something? Had she compromised herself? Unwitting, had

she let herself into something ugly? Vague stories, sinister whispers of politics, public affairs, leaped into his remembrance. Her ambitions he knew. He knew, too, that she—that is, Mrs. Redmond—would make no distinction in methods. "In politics no sex" was the watchword of these women, Mrs. Redmond's associates, hers as well. They fought with the same tools as the men's. But if Myrta—

Myrta again—Myrta, not Mrs. Redmond. An exclamation, sharp, explosive, escaped him. Shoving back his chair, he rose abruptly.

Harriet Lipp, as if her eye had been glued to the crack in the pantry door, at once shoved it open.

"Say! You ain't y'r breakfast!" she barked.

Redmond had flung down his napkin on the cloth. He looked at the figure in the doorway.

"What did your mistress say?" he demanded.

Harriet Lipp's eyes narrowed deviously.

"Say when?" she countered.

"This morning—just now," rapped Redmond, his temper rising. "Is she ill?" he snapped again.

JOHN'S DIPLOMACY

The Jeweler's Guess Is Wrong When the Young Man Returns for the Final Selection of a Betrothal Token



"AND BESS, DRAWING HERSELF PARTLY AWAY, LOOKED AT HIM LOVINGLY."

BY J. A. WALDRON.

HEY kissed to seal the engagement, John's salute being emphasized by the warmth of his embrace. And Bess, drawing herself partly away, looked at him lovingly.

"Now, darling," said he, "nothing more is needed to bind us until the happier day but a ring."

"A ring. Of course." That she had already thought of a ring was patent from her air of expectancy.

"And you shall go with me to select it, dearest," he added.

That some young man get the measurement of a finger to be sure of it, but that must take away something of surprise. And others get a ring haphazard, and if it doesn't fit, the girl has to have it fixed. But my way is best. You'll go with me."

"Oh, how thoughtful of you, John, dear!" She put up her lips again. "If I were a millionaire, or the son of a millionaire, I should have brought you the finest ring to be had—after I had in some way measured your finger without seeming to do so. But I'm a young man without too much money, although my prospects are very good. And I know you love me for myself alone and are willing to wait until I get to the point where I can please you with surprise."

"Of course, dear—I know. And as she took it from the jeweler's

your asking me to go with you to pick out a ring is a great compliment in itself!"

"Thank you!" He initiated the kiss this time. "Tomorrow is Saturday. I am not going to the office. I'll call for you early, and we will have luncheon at some quiet place after we have found the ring. I have a letter to a wholesale jeweler from a close friend of his who insists that I can get a diamond ring for a price."

"Isn't that fine? You are so clever, dear!"

THE next morning John and Bess visited the wholesale jeweler. That expert gentleman was very gracious after reading John's letter of introduction. It was quite unusual to have a prospective groom and his fiancée as visitors on such an errand.

The jeweler studied them with keen interest as he set a sparkling tray before them. "Diamonds are diamonds these days, my young friends," he remarked as he deftly picked a solitaire from the tray. "Here is a ring that was \$150 before the war."

"But how much is it now?" John asked.

"Two hundred and three-quarters. And cheap at that, as they run. You might pay \$150 at a retailer's."

"Isn't it lovely!" exclaimed Bess, with surprise.

"Of course, dear—I know. And as she took it from the jeweler's

finger. "May I try it?"

"Why not?" suggested the jeweler. "But it's a bit too—too expensive," said John.

"See how it fits! Perfectly! How wonderful!" exclaimed Bess.

"I've a great eye for fingers, Miss," said the jeweler, inhaling proudly.

"But, dear—," John began.

"You think it's too much?" she asked him.

"I'm afraid so, Bess. Then to the jeweler: 'Have you something a little—'"

"Cheaper? I have everything—all prices, my young friend." And the jeweler with a lapidary's grace picked out of a mass of brilliance another ring. The setting was quite as imposing as that of the first ring, but the gem was smaller, and thus seemed less brilliant. "Here is one for—\$175. A pretty stone."

"That looks good to me, Bess," said John.

Bess fondled the ring on her finger as she removed it reluctantly. "It is a pretty ring. If one hadn't seen this!" Handling the better ring back to the jeweler, she gingerly took the other, and half-heartedly tried it.

"This fits nice!"

"I knew it would," said the man of gems. "And I'll say this," he added, with a kindly smile: "Always buy within your means, young man. Perhaps later you can buy the lady a

thousand-dollar stone—after you're married!"

"Perhaps," replied John.

Bess had taken off the second ring, and handed it to the jeweler.

"I have such a stock—so many that seem just alike to one not expert—that I can put both of these aside, say for a week, until you make up your minds, my young friends."

"Oh, can you?" asked Bess.

"Mostly accommodating of you, sir," said John. "We shall think it over—and thank you."

ALTHOUGH John and Bess went out arm in arm, their steps were less buoyant and their faces more serious than when they entered. The jeweler looked after them curiously, and shook his head.

A week later, to a day, John came in to the jeweler alone and smiling. "I am taking the cheaper ring," he said.

"Ah! I congratulate you, young man! That means something quite important to you as a married man. You are very clever—a young diplomat, I should guess!"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean this," said the jeweler, producing both rings. "Any young man who can show a girl two rings like these and induce her to take the cheaper will go far in life."

"You're a little off, if you'll excuse the expression," replied John. "I've got another girl."

"No, she ain't," the woman answered.

"Then why isn't she coming down?" asked Redmond.

With direct finality, the woman answered him. "She's a-breakfastin' abed," said Harriet Lipp.

That ended it.

For a long moment afterward, the hard-featured maid stood there at the pantry door, she and Redmond, her face strained as she gazed after him. A breath escaped her. The mystery of all this, though, was not revealed to Redmond. Already he was at the stairway, hurrying upward.

MRS. REDMOND'S room was at the front of the house, on the floor above. For years—four years now, nearly five—she and her husband had occupied separate rooms. As Redmond reached the door he paused. His hand uplifted, he made as if to knock, then desisted. Standing there, he put one ear to the panel and listened.

It was only for an instant, though. The next instant, without even the formality of a knock, he thrust open the door and stepped inside.

She lay there among the coverings of the bed, her back to him; and as he entered, calling to her, she did not move. Along the pillows the masses of her thick, silky hair, like ropes of burnished copper, lay strewn; and above the coverings a limp, slender arm, girlishly rounded and pink, revealed itself. She was still young—a woman only a year or so over thirty; and now, as Redmond looked at her, her figure among the coverings seemed appealingly slight and youthful. More than that, though, in its supine pose at the moment there was a suggestion of laxity, of helpless dejection that he was quick to see.

"Myrta!" he cried again.

She answered him then. It was, however, Mrs. Redmond rather than the Myrta he called who spoke. Nor did she turn. From among the pillows her voice rose formal and precise—the voice of Mrs. Redmond, the public woman's voice, the voice of a woman only a year or so over thirty; and now, as Redmond looked at her, her figure among the coverings seemed appealingly slight and youthful. More than that, though, in its supine pose at the moment there was a suggestion of laxity, of helpless dejection that he was quick to see.

"What is it?" she inquired.

Redmond paused midway across the room. His air, his look, eager and anxious, altered too.

"You all right?" he questioned.

A pause. She still did not turn, and in the pause he stirred uncomfortably. Then from the bed came her voice, its note, as before, still precise.

"All right? . . . Why do you ask, pray?"

Uncertainly, he took a step toward her.

"Why, you see, you didn't come to your breakfast," he faltered.

Again she replied, this time with a change, a note of petulance in her voice.

"I'm breakfasting here," she said. "I know—but the meeting—tonight's—your time," he faltered again.

Another pause. Then from the pillows the reply. It came slowly—as if, with the effort, ponderously.

"There is to be no meeting," said Mrs. Redmond.

"What?" interrogated Redmond.

A movement of restless impatience stirred among the pillows.

"I have called it off—concealed it. 'You've postponed it' he inquired.

There was again a movement among the pillows—sharp, vehement, visibly emphatic.

"I have told you once," Mrs. Redmond said sharply; "there is to be no meeting. That is enough, isn't it?" she uttered again.

"Myrta!" exclaimed Redmond.

Swiftly he hastened to the bed. In the same haste, the alert alarm bred of his concern for her, he laid a hand upon her shoulder.

"Myrta! . . . My dear!" Mrs. Redmond directed anxiously.

The hand on her shoulder she shook away. With the same movement she drew the coverings about her. This, too, she did with a cold, formal deliberation whose dignity was unmistakable. Now, however, wonder, trepidation too, had the better of Redmond; and he missed the majestic rancor of the gesture.

"Myrta, what's wrong? What's happened? Tell me!"

She turned then, momentarily tense, her features vital with the emotion she still strove to repress. Her voice harsh, she said: "Mrs. Redmond."

"You, of course, would not understand. It's ended—that's all," she said.

Redmond gaped.

"Ended? . . . What's ended?"

"Everything—for the time, anyway," she replied. "I'm done for, that's enough, isn't it?"

"Done for?"

Her lip for an instant curved bitterly.

"You heard me!" she returned. "You don't suppose for a moment, do you, that I could run now for that office?" She laughed harshly. "This year?" She laughed again, the laugh more rasping; and his jaw dropping, aghast, Redmond stared at her.

"Myrta!"

Among the pillows she again gave her shoulders a shrug.

"Bah! . . . Fancy facing those women now!"

THE women she meant he knew. They were those other women, her associates—public women like Mrs. Redmond herself. Why, however, she could not face them Redmond had yet to grasp. Stunned, he caught swiftly at his breath. Then, as he stared down at her, the thought, the suspicion already that morning engendered in his mind, saw in her strained, embittered face the answering glow, an affirmative.

Shame.

"Myrta," said Redmond, his voice thick. "What have you done?"

"I?"

She looked up at him sharply, tossing from her brow the thick, burnished waves of her hair.

"What? You mean you don't don't understand?"

"What's wrong, Myrta? Tell me," said Redmond stoutly. "I'll help you. I'll stand by you, dear. It's trouble—if even it's a wrong—"

"Wrong?"

"Yes, if even shame—"

He got no further. A laugh, sharp and intolerantly bitter and disgusted came from among the pillows. It caught Redmond midway in his words, and left him, like a stranded fish, gasping helplessly.

"You do, you numskull!" said Mrs. Redmond.

She told him then. It was to Redmond, too, the news—as if she, Mrs. Redmond, had reached from the bed and felled him to the floor. He sat there, staring at her, his face, his eyes, leaped the light, transfiguring like a swift burst of sunshine through a cloud.

"Myrta!" he thrilled. Radiant, quivering to his feet, he dared he would have reached down and caught her to his arms.

He dared not, though. It was Mrs. Redmond, her face distorted with the bitterness of her defeated ambitions, that gazed up at him from among the pillows.

"Fahaw!" she said, her lip curled anew. "You're like all men, all you husbands. That's all you think about. You gave her shoulders another disgusted, embittered shrug. 'Go away; leave me. I want to sleep,' she said.

Redmond went. It was as if he went, too, treading the mountain tops.

FAMOUS OLD SONGS

Auld Lang Syne

SINCE Robert Burns first wrote the famous "Auld Lang Syne" that song has been sung at more social gatherings and knitted more intimate friendships than any other melody in all the world.

It has been sung by the sober and by the intoxicated of all nations; old pledges of good fellowship have been renewed and new faiths in comradeship cemented. It has been the outburst of faithfulness. It has been a pretense of melody from the lips of those who thought they could, but could not, sing; and yet through all of its use the old melody of sweetness has run like a golden thread.

Like so many songs which have come to stay and which never grow old as the years pass by, this banquet song of the world makes no claim to literary merit. It is simply a repetition of sentimental lines, whose lack of real merit is made up from another source.

This old song has gone through many changes as the years pass by. For instance, two copies are here presented from different sources—the first from Graham's "Songs of Scotland" and the latter from "The Household Book of Poetry."

Eighteenth Century.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And new though won upon?
Let's be a waught o' Mairies,
For auld lang syne, my jo,
For auld lang syne.

Nineteenth Century.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days of lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

Let's be a waught o' Mairies,
For auld lang syne,
For auld lang syne.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And days of lang syne?

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup o' kindness yet
For auld lang syne.

Largest Statue.

IT is reported from Japan that there is being carved there the largest statue in the world. It is a recumbent effigy of Nichiren, a Japanese patron saint, cut from a natural granite rock on a hillside in the Island of Ushigakubi, or the "Cov's Head," in the inland sea of Seto.

This stone image, it appears, will be 240 feet long, 60 feet longer than the sleeping Buddha at Segu, and considerably larger than the Sphinx in Egypt.

Nichiren, whose name means "Lotus of the Sun," was a religious teacher, who lived in the thirteenth century. At one time he was condemned to death, but the headman's sword, the Japanese say, "was unable to decapitate him." One of his present-day worshippers, a very wealthy Japanese, is bearing the expense of having the huge stone carved in honor of the saint.

WHEN Henry Stevens bought in London the original manuscript of the Burns poem and brought it to this country he wrote to a friend, J. L. Pruyn, in Albany, N. Y., a letter, from which this extract is made:

"My dear Sir: 'Light be the turf on the breast of the heaven-inspired poet who composed this glorious fragment.' So wrote Burns to the 17th of December, 1788, to his friend, Mrs. Dunlop, whom he would make believe that 'Auld Lang Syne' came from another man. It is now acknowledged to have been based on an old song, but it received its fire from Burns."

"A fragment containing 'Auld Lang Syne' is part of a letter to Mrs. Dun-